

School Age Care Environment Rating Scale (SACERS) WISCONSIN INTERPRETATIONS

2/27/15

As technical assistance occurs in child care programs, it is important for YoungStar Technical Consultants, providers, and other trainers/technical assistance providers to provide information on what the Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale (ECERS-R), Infant Toddler Environment Rating Scale-Revised (ITERS-R), Family Child Care Environment Rating Scale-Revised (FCCERS-R), or SACERS tools will be looking at, and also on the intent of the ECERS-R, ITERS-R, FCCERS-R or SACERS observation. When Wisconsin licensing regulations are in contrast to environment rating scale quality indicators, the Wisconsin licensing rules take precedence.

TERMS

CAPACITY - For the Registry Program Profile, the process to determine school-age groups follows licensing ratios:

- Licensed programs with licensed capacity will use licensing rules to determine groups/classrooms and staff to child ratios (not to exceed)
 - 4 to 5 years 1:13 (Adult/Child Ratio) 1:24 (Group Size)
 - 5 to 6 years 1:17 (Adult/Child Ratio) 1:34 (Group Size)
 - 6 years and older 1:18 (Adult/Child Ratio) 1:36 (Group Size)
- Exempt programs will use average daily enrollment to determine groups/classrooms
 - These programs do not have a licensed capacity number reported.

For the SACERS observation in a Formal Rating, the Wisconsin licensing rules will determine the groups/rooms and staff to child ratios.

To determine age appropriate for School Age Programs, materials can be supportive of the following age groups or in large programs by segmenting grade levels.

Example:

- K – 3rd Grade
- 4th – 6th Grade

SOME - There are 2 or more materials/items available for children.

VARIED - There are 3 – 5 materials/items available for children. Program must have at least 2 types of items for each age group. Number of items must be of sufficient quantity. Items must be sufficient so that children do not have to wait long periods of time to use equipment they choose to use. There must be enough interesting options so that no one item is overwhelmingly popular.

Example: Music and Movement – 2 of 3 categories needed (Ex: cassettes, CD's, dance props, musical instruments)

VARIETY OF SKILLS - Items must stimulate a variety of skills.

Examples: Furnishings for Gross Motor Activities – different types and sizes of sport balls represented

MANY – There should be 3 – 5 materials/items are available for children. Program must have at least 3, with 2 for each age group.

AVAILABLE – Materials are present and exist in the setting.

ACCESSIBLE – Children are allowed to use the materials whenever they want to unless they are engaged in scheduled activities such as meals/snacks, homework/quiet activities time, gross motor activities indoors or outdoors. Children can reach and use materials, furnishings and equipment. School-age children are more independent and can remember where materials are even if they are not visible. Items in the tools that are given as examples are only examples. The furnishings should be age and developmentally appropriate.

WISCONSIN INTERPRETATIONS

Minimum Indoor Temperature

Item 1, Indicators 1.2 and 3.2 (ECERS-R, ITERS-R, FCCERS-R, and SACERS)

1.2 Lacks adequate temperature control.

3.2 Adequate temperature control.

The ERS tools require that the spaces or rooms used by children must be kept at a comfortable temperature. Wisconsin licensing rules require that the inside temperature may not be less than 67°F in all indoor spaces. “Indoor spaces” refers to all spaces served by the building’s ventilation system (heating and/or air conditioning). Since sensitivity to room temperature varies greatly, the adequacy of the room temperature will be judged based on how comfortable the children and adults appear to be. The temperature will only be checked if the children and/or staff indicate discomfort based on the room temperature.

SACERS #8. Furnishings for Gross Motor Activities

1.2 Stationary equipment in poor repair or not age appropriate.

Wisconsin Interpretation

EXPLANATION: Indicator will not be marked off for if children do not use the stationary equipment and are told not to use the stationary equipment during program hours of operation.

SACERS #13. Health Practices

3.2 Same staff supervises both the sick child and healthy children without proper health precautions. (Ex. Staff washes hands after contact with sick child.) The intent of the indicator scoring is to observe staff using proper health precautions, e.g. hands washed after taking child’s temperature, etc.

Wisconsin Interpretation

EXPLANATION: 3.2 is changed to “Same staff supervises both the sick child and healthy children with proper health precautions.” Indicator as written for the Wisconsin Interpretations will be scored as a YES when staff is observed washing hands after contact with sick child. Same staff can supervise both the sick child and healthy children but need to follow proper health precautions. This indicator is based

on provision for children who have serious infectious illnesses that require special care, not children with the more common mild infectious illnesses that do not impair their ability to participate in the group and do not require additional care.

SACERS #14. Emergency and Safety Policy

5.1 One person with current FA/CPR certification at all times in facility.

7.1 All regular staff have current FA/CPR certificate.

Notes for Clarification from SACERS book: + Annual renewal of First Aid is required.

Wisconsin Interpretation

5.1 One person with current First Aid and CPR certificate is present at all times in facility.

7.1 All regular staff have current First Aid certificates, including CPR.

EXPLANATION: The Wisconsin interpretation will be that the CPR training only needs to be renewed every two years or if the CPR certificate of completion does not have a date specifying the length of time for which it is valid, then CPR training must be renewed every two years.

Wisconsin licensing rules require that if the CPR certificate of completion does not have a date specifying the length of time for which it is valid, then CPR training must be renewed every two years. American Heart Association and American Red Cross CPR certification is a two-year renewal. (Revised industry standards).

SACERS #15. Safety Practice

1.2 Hazards present in outdoor areas (specific to unfenced play area).

Wisconsin Interpretation

Unfenced play area: This hazard will not be considered in the indicator as a YES for an unfenced play area if the designated play area is used by only school age children.

EXPLANATION: An unfenced play area for school age groups would be allowed when staff can state that they have made hazards known to the children. "If hazards exist, such as traffic or bodies of water, the boundaries of outdoor play space shall be made known to the children." Wisconsin Licensing Rules for Group Child Care Centers 251.06(11). Wisconsin Licensing Rules for Family Child Care Centers 250-.06(11).

1.1 Safety problems indoors. (Ex: medicines and other hazardous substances not locked away, doors without panic bars).

1.2 Hazards present in outdoor area (Ex: equipment unsafe, hard surface under climbing equipment, glass and trash in yard).

1.1 and/or 1.2 will be scored as "Yes" if any of the following are observed.

- A listed safety hazard that is also a licensing violation
- Items labeled "keep out of reach" (lotions, soap, toothpaste, sunscreen, shaving cream, etc.) may be present in the school-age room as long as school-age children are properly supervised and children are not inappropriately using the materials when the items are frequently used in activities.

- Materials listed below must be locked up and made inaccessible to school-age children. Locked means key lock, magnetic lock, or child-proof safety latches. For example, locked items can be kept in a locked closet, cabinet, or boxes.
 - Major hazards
 - Medicines
 - Pesticides
 - Pure bleach and other cleaning products
 - Aerosols
 - Teachers' purses

1.1 and 1.2 Hazards should be noted as having 2 or more in these indicators.

SACERS #18. Meals and Snacks

3.3 Meals and snacks meet USDA requirements.

Wisconsin Interpretation

Explanation: School-age children present after school shall be served a snack. Each meal and snack served shall meet the CACFP guidelines and minimum meal requirements. Meals and snacks will not be available for purchase. Meals and snacks may be provided by parents and shall meet the CACFP guidelines and minimum meal requirements.

SACERS #22. Blocks and Construction

7.2 Age-appropriate, functional carpentry tools and soft wood available for construction projects.

Wisconsin Interpretation

Explanation: Wisconsin Licensing Rules: Programs are not allowed to use power tools or battery operated tools. Programs may use hand tools and should be able to use glue (if it says keep out of reach of children – staff should be directly supervising the use of the material by children).

SACERS # 28. Greeting/Departing

3.2 Acknowledgment of children's arrival and departure is inconsistent.

Wisconsin Interpretation

3.2 To allow for positive scoring, this indicator has been reworded as: There was some acknowledgment of children's arrival and departure, but not all need to be greeted or told farewell.

SACERS #29. Staff-Child Interactions

3.1 Staff responds inconsistently.

3.2 Staff favors or dislikes particular children.

Wisconsin Interpretation

3.1 To allow for positive scoring, this indicator has been reworded as: Staff responds consistently. If staff responds consistently, this indicator will be scored a yes.

3.2 To allow for positive scoring, this indicator has been reworded as: Staff does not favor or dislike particular children. If staff does not favor or dislike particular children, this indicator will be scored a yes.

SACERS #34. Interactions between staff and parents.

5.2 Regularly scheduled parent conferences.

Wisconsin Interpretation

Wisconsin licensing rules will apply the requirement of twice a year for the indicator 5.2.

SACERS ADDITIONAL CLARIFICATIONS FROM AUTHORS*

Additional Notes for Clarification for the SACERS are available at:

http://www.ersi.info/sacers_notes.html.

SACERS #4. Room Arrangement

7.2 Additional materials available to add to or change centers or rooms.

Materials added to or changed monthly.

SACERS #5. Furnishings for routine care.

3.1 Sufficient number of routine-care furnishings.

When determining whether furniture for routine care is sufficient, consider the sizes of cubbies in relation to what is stored in them to see if they can adequately accommodate all of each child's possessions. Each child enrolled in the group must have an individual cubby that is not shared with anyone else, with space for all possessions to be stored there. This is to reduce the spread of lice and scabies. When children's personal belonging, such as coats, extra clothing, blankets (if stored in cubbies), are not reasonably well-separated, or if cubbies are so full that things fall onto the floor, 3.1 will be scored a "NO" because the cubbies are not adequate in size based on what must be stored in them. If there is only minor touching of possessions (e.g. protruding sleeves of winter coats touching those of other children, or a small problems with other materials, but this could be solved easily by pushing things into the cubby properly, consider the cubbies adequate. Any touching of children's personal possessions should also be considered in the Health item.

SACERS #6. Furnishings for learning.

5.2 At least 3 pieces of art displayed.

7.1 At least 3 learning and recreational activity furnishings used regularly. At least one of the examples must be used at least once a week (sensory station, construction/building area, or computer).

The items in 7.1 are listed as examples. Items used should be age and developmentally appropriate furnishings.

SACERS #13. Health Practices

5.1 Child is isolated in a separate room at the first sign of illness.

5.2 Staff takes proper health precautions when supervising sick child.

If 5.1 is No, then 5.2 will also be a No.

SACERS #15. Safety practice.

5.1 Staff makes frequent inspections of grounds, facilities, and equipment for potential hazards, and safety hazards are eliminated or dealt with.

Indicator 5.1 must be scored regardless of whether the program shares space with a host facility. Frequent inspections means that there are staff members assigned to conduct an inspection at least weekly.

SACERS #20. Arts and crafts

3.1 Some materials accessible for free choice daily.

Drawing materials plus one other art/craft activity must be accessible.

5.1 Variety of materials accessible for free choice daily.

For Indicator 5.1. “varied” requires 3 – 5 different art materials from the list of examples: felt pens, crayons and pencils for drawing, tempera and watercolor paints, glue, scissors, clay, play dough, materials for collage, embroidery, weaving, origami, and jewelry making. In addition, more complex craft projects are required. If more than 20 children are enrolled, more examples are required.

7.1 Opportunities must be provided quarterly.

SACERS #22. Blocks and Construction

3.1 Some construction materials accessible as a free choice activity weekly.

Interlocking construction materials like Legos are included.

5.2 Sufficient materials for 3 or more children to use at one time.

At least 2 different types should be accessible in sufficient quantity to meet 5.2.

7.1 Variety of construction materials accessible daily.

Variety refers to at least three different types of blocks or building materials. Variety can mean materials with different themes (e.g. Lego Pirate Ship, Castle with Knights), or different types of blocks and construction materials.

SACERS #23. Drama/theater

5.1 Variety of props, which support many roles and situations (work, adventure, fantasy).

Variety refers to enough props that would support the ability for children to carry out two different themes. As a general rule, make sure there are things to interest boys and girls. If more than 20 children are enrolled, more examples are required. The indicator and notes give many examples. Remember that action figures and small playhouses are included as well. Generally take the age of the children and their interests into consideration.

SACERS #24 Language/reading activities

5.1 Many books and age-appropriate language games accessible to the children on a daily basis (Ex: Junior Scrabble, Pictionary).

For Indicator 5.1, “many” means 3 – 5 materials and at least two types of materials for each age group served (lower primary K-3, upper primary 4 -6, intermediate, middle school, etc.) If more than 20 children are enrolled, more examples are required. There should be a variety of books that are on topics of interest to the children, not just a collection of old discarded library or school books. Both factual and fiction books should be accessible, and books on several reading levels. Because most school age children can read there is still distinction made between inappropriate images and inappropriate text. Appropriateness includes content that is not violent, sexually explicit or biased towards any group. For older children, the vast majority of materials should be appropriate, with no materials being extremely inappropriate. Since children will probably not lack exposure to inappropriate materials in other settings, the school age program should concentrate on positive input.

7.1 Staff take children to library to borrow books on a weekly basis.

Bookmobile or on-site lending library (such as a school library or community library) meets the requirements for this indicator.

SACERS #25. Math/reasoning activities

5.1 Variety of age-appropriate math/reasoning games and activities accessible for free choice daily.

For Indicator 5.1, “variety” means 3 – 5 games/activities and at least two types of materials for each age group served (Lower primary K-3, upper primary 4 -6, intermediate, middle school, etc.). If more than 20 children are enrolled, more examples are required.

SACERS #26. Science/nature activities

5.1 Variety of science/nature materials accessible daily.

For Indicator 5.1, “variety” means 3 – 5 games/activities and at least two types of materials for each age group served (Lower primary K-3, upper primary 4 -6, intermediate, middle school, etc.). If more than 20 children are enrolled, more examples are required.

5.2 Children are involved in science and nature activities (Ex: help feed animals or water plants, encouraged to add to science/nature display).

Activities must occur weekly. There is no set number of times during the week. It depends on the activity. If children are involved in water plants or feeding animals, there should be a schedule that the children are aware of. If it is bringing in additions to collections or starting a collection this can be monthly or seasonally. The interest in science/nature activities should be obvious. The activities should be part of the group's experience.

SACERS #27. Cultural awareness

5.1 Many multicultural materials visible that reflect the diversity of peoples.

To receive credit there must be at least 10 different examples of diversity found in books, pictures, or materials that represent any of the categories of diversity. If more than 20 children are enrolled, more examples are required. Race, culture, age, gender, and abilities must be represented but to varying degrees. Variety refers to more than one type of materials for each age group served (lower primary K-3, upper primary 4 – 6, intermediate, middle school, etc.).

The SACERS requirements are for books and materials/activities because the posted pictures are often put up by the main users of the room. If the group has their own room/area and pictures posted, credit can be received. The multicultural materials should be easily visible as part of the daily program.

SACERS #30. Staff-child communication

5.1 Staff-child conversations are frequent.

7.1 Staff make effort to talk with each child (Ex: listen to child's description of school day, including problems and successes).

To receive credit, the conversations must be observed in at least 2 instances.

SACERS #31. Staff supervision of children

7.1 Staff talk to children about ideas related to their play and help collaborate and extend the activity.

To receive credit, at least 2 instances must be observed. The group leader/teacher should add information for "expansion" credit to be received.

7.2 Staff are available to coach team sports and help with activities requiring adult input.

If not observed, question will be asked if this is available and to give examples.

SACERS #33. Peer interactions

5.2 Peer interactions usually positive (Ex. Cooperation, sharing; children generally play well together).

Staff should be good models most of the time, with no example of negative modeling.

5.3 Staff help children develop appropriate social behavior with peers (Ex: staff help children talk through social conflicts).

This must be observed as a general practice. If there are no conflicts and other social interaction is observed, credit will be received.

SACERS #38. Free choice

5.1 Most of the time, children may choose from a wide variety of age-appropriate games, materials, and activities.

Most of the time is indicating at least 50% of the program operating hours. This means most of the time that children are not engaged in routines and includes both indoor and outdoor activities. Programs should recognize that children should have the freedom of choice and independence as children grow in competence.

7.2 New materials to extend choices are added periodically in response to children's interests.

A program can receive credit for this indicator when additional materials are added to or changed monthly.

SELECTION OF TOOLS

Questions to answer for the purpose of selecting tools for use in self-assessment or formal rating.

1. What are the ages in the school-age program?
2. What time of the year does the school-age program meet?
 School year only
 Holiday vacation days, school-out days
 Summer months
3. How many hours does the school-age program meet?
 Full day
 After school
 After school and before school
4. What is the number of groups?
5. What is the number of children in each group?
6. Where are the groups physically located?
7. Is the 4K wrap-around program physical classroom separate for the duration of the wrap-around afterschool?
8. Does the 4K wrap-around program move from the physical classroom to join 5K-12 year olds?

CHART FOR ERS TOOL USE

SCALE	GCC 0 – 12 yr	FCC 0 – 12 yr	SA Licensed or Certified	SA Exempt Program
ITERS-R	YES 0 – 2 ½	NO	NO	NO
ECERS-R	YES 2 ½ - 5	NO	NO	YES If 4K is separate from 5 – 12 yr old activities
SACERS	YES 5 – 12	YES 5 – 12 Only and program is outside of home	YES	YES
FCCERS-R	NO	YES If school-age programming is operated in the provider's home	NO	NO

Notes

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